

What is claimed is:

1 1. A ride plate positioning mechanism for a personal watercraft having a craft body,
2 an engine and a jet propeller driven by said engine, such that said personal watercraft is
3 capable of being propelled by jet water generated by said jet propeller,
4 said ride plate positioning mechanism comprising:
5 a removable ride plate for defining a bottom portion of a stern of said craft body,
6 said ride plate comprising a pair of integrally formed left and right positioning projections
7 projecting upwardly at a front portion of said ride plate, said positioning projections having
8 front faces for contacting said craft body; and
9 a pair of left and right tab stops formed in said craft body of said watercraft, for
10 contacting the front faces of said positioning projections.

1 2. The ride plate positioning mechanism of claim 1, wherein the ride plate further
2 comprises an elevated arresting member extending outwardly at the front end thereof, for
3 stabilizing placement on a support piece.

1 3. The ride plate positioning mechanism of claim 2, wherein the elevated arresting
2 member is narrower than the widest part of said ride plate.

1 4. The ride plate positioning mechanism of claim 4, wherein said craft body
2 comprises a stator and a dependent ridge which extends downwardly adjacent said stator, and
3 wherein said projecting tabs fit nestingly between said tap stops and said dependent ridge.

1 5. The ride plate positioning mechanism of claim 1, wherein said ride plate includes
2 side edge portions which are raised up in relation to adjoining portions of said ride plate.

1 6. The ride plate positioning mechanism of claim 5, wherein said craft body has an
2 opening formed in said bottom portion of said stern with a pair of shallow, spaced apart
3 stepped recesses formed at the sides of said opening to receive said side edge portions of said
4 ride plate.

1 7. The ride plate positioning mechanism of claim 1, wherein said positioning
2 projections have flattened front faces which are substantially vertically oriented.

1 8. The ride plate positioning mechanism of claim 1, wherein said positioning
2 projections are constructed and arranged to have a substantially rectangular horizontal cross-
3 sectional shape.

1 9. The ride plate positioning mechanism of claim 1, wherein said ride plate further
2 comprises at least one raised rib extending transversely across an upper surface thereof
3 behind said positioning projections.

1 10. The ride plate positioning mechanism of claim 9, wherein said ride plate has a
2 plurality of spaced-apart raised ribs on said upper surface thereof.

1 11. A method of aligning a ride plate with a stern of a personal watercraft,
2 comprising the steps of:
3 placing opposed front corners of said ride plate between opposed stepped recesses
4 formed in a bottom surface of a stern of said watercraft,
5 sliding said ride plate forwardly until a pair of integrally formed left and right
6 positioning projections on an upper front portion of said ride plate contact a pair of left and
7 right tab stops formed in said watercraft stern.

1 12. The method of claim 11, further comprising a step of pivotally moving said ride
2 plate until the side edges thereof fit into said stepped recesses.

1 13. The method of claim 11, further comprising a step of attaching said ride plate to
2 said watercraft body with fasteners.

1 14. The method of claim 11, wherein said watercraft stern comprises a substantially
2 vertical transverse wall face, and wherein said tab stops are formed as part of said
3 substantially vertical transverse wall face.